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Subject: Federal Economic Stimulus Funding for Highways

Importance: High

To: Iowa Metropolitan Planning Organizations
and Regional Planning Affiliations

Date: January 28, 2009

From: Stuart Anderson, Director
Planning, Programming and Modal Division
Iowa Department of Transportation

Subject: Federal Economic Stimulus Funding for Highways

Thank you for your efforts in the last two weeks to identify potential federal highway stimulus projects. We have received your draft lists of potential projects and are completing our review. As stated in our initial e-mail to you, the purpose of these lists is to permit a review of potential projects for eligibility and readiness and to identify the ability of local governments to utilize all of the local highway stimulus funding. We are continuing to review the list, but it is clear that there are more than enough local projects ready to use the federal highway stimulus funding even under the most restrictive time constraints. We hope the lists you provided reflect the universe of potential projects that will be considered for stimulus under the assumed time constraints, but we also recognize that the list is subject to change as further investigation and review is completed at the local and state level. We also recognize that if the time constraints for utilizing the federal highway stimulus funding are less stringent than we are currently assuming, there will be an opportunity to reevaluate those project lists at the RPA/MPO level. Your project lists are not final until TIP amendments are approved by the policy board after the stimulus bill is signed.

We have heard concerns from a few small communities that they were not given the opportunity to have their projects adequately considered. It appears that this was primarily related to the short time-frames available to prepare the draft project lists. Consistent with past allocation of federal highway funding to RPAs and MPOs, the project selection process is guided by your

policy boards; however, we ask that all local stimulus projects be given an opportunity to seek stimulus funding. Of course, the final funding decision will continue to reside with the policy board.

Some local jurisdictions have already turned in, or are preparing to turn in, stimulus project plans to the DOT District offices for the April 21st letting. We are prepared to move forward with those projects in the April letting but we would like confirmation from you that both the RPA/MPO and the local jurisdiction would like to proceed with the letting of those projects even in the event that the time-constraints are extended. We ask that you let us know by this Monday, February 2, 2009 if you would like the projects to proceed with the April letting. Please send this confirmation via e-mail to Charlie Purcell, Office of Local Systems at charlie.purcell@dot.iowa.gov and your respective DOT District Local Systems Engineer. Also, please remember that all federal-aid project requirements apply to these stimulus projects.

If you have any questions or require additional information, please contact Shawn Majors at (515) 239-1288.

cc: Jon Ranney, Director, Office of Program Management
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